

7: Hooker D-5 (1849-1851) 1854
AK5 Lepcha AK5

000 HIMALAYAN JOURNALS;

OR,

NOTES OF A NATURALIST

IN BENGAL, THE SIKKIM AND NEPAL HIMALAYAS,
THE KHASIA MOUNTAINS, &c.

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WITH MAPS AND ILLUSTRATIONS.

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[title page]

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CHAPTER V.

View from Mr. Hodgson's of range of snowy mountains—Their extent and elevation—Delusive appearance of elevation—Sinchul, view from and vegetation of—Chumulari—Magnolias, white and purple—Rhododendron Dalhousie, arboreum and argenteum—Natives of Dorjiling—Lepchas, origin, tradition of flood, morals, dress, arms, ornaments, diet—cups, origin and value—Marriages—Diseases—Burial—Worship and religion—Bijooas—Kampa Rong, or Arratt—Limboos, origin, habits, language, &c.—Moormis—Magras—Mechia—Comparison of customs with those of the natives of Assam, Khasia, &c.

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114 THE summer, or rainy season of 1848, was passed at or near Dorjiling, during which period I chiefly occupied myself in forming collections, and in taking meteorological observations. I resided at Mr Hodgson's for the greater part of the time, in consequence of his having given me a hospitable invitation to consider his house my home. The view from his windows is one quite unparalleled for the scenery it embraces, commanding confessedly the grandest known landscape of snowy mountains in the Himalaya, and hence in the world.* Kinchinjunga (forty-five miles distant) is the prominent object, rising 21,000 feet above the level of the observer out of a sea of intervening wooded hills; whilst, on a line with its snows, the eye descends below the horizon, to a narrow gulf 7000 feet deep in the mountains, where the Great Rungeet, white with foam, threads a tropical forest with a silver line.

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* For an account of the geography of these regions, and the relation of the Sikkim Himalaya to Tibet, &c., see Appendix.

To the north-west towards Nepal, the snowy peaks of ¹³³ Kubra and Junnoo (respectively 24,005 feet and 25,312 feet) rise over the shoulder of Singalelah; whilst eastward the snowy mountains appear to form an unbroken range, trending north-east to the great mass of Donkia (23,176 feet) and thence south-east by the fingered peaks of Tunkola and the silver cone of Chola, (17,320 feet) gradually sinking into the Bhotan mountains at Gipmoochi (14,509 feet).

The most eloquent descriptions I have read fail to convey to my mind's eye the forms and colours of snowy mountains, or to my imagination the sensations and impressions that rivet my attention to these sublime phenomena when they are present in reality; and I shall not therefore obtrude any attempt of the kind upon my reader. The latter has probably seen the Swiss Alps, which, though barely possessing half the sublimity, extent, or height of the Himalaya, are yet far more beautiful. In either case he is struck with the precision and sharpness of their outlines, and still more with the wonderful play of colours on their snowy flanks, from the glowing hues reflected in orange, gold and ruby, from clouds illumined by the sinking or rising sun, to the ghastly pallor that succeeds with twilight, when the red seems to give place to its complementary colour green. Such dissolving-views elude all attempts at description, they are far too aerial to be chained to the memory, and fade from it so fast as to be gazed upon day after day, with undiminished admiration and pleasure, long after the mountains themselves have lost their sublimity and apparent height.

The actual extent of the snowy range seen from Mr. Hodgson's windows is comprised within an arc of 80° (from north 30° west to north 50° east), or nearly a quarter

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133 of the horizon, along which the perpetual snow forms an unbroken girdle or crest of frosted silver; and in winter, when the mountains are covered down to 8000 feet, this white ridge stretches uninterruptedly for more than 160° . No known view is to be compared with this in extent, when the proximity and height of the mountains are considered; for within the 80° above mentioned more than twelve peaks rise above 20,000 feet, and there are none below 15,000 feet, while Kinchin is 28,178, and seven others above 22,000. The nearest perpetual snow is on Nursing, a beautifully sharp conical peak 19,139 feet high, and thirty-two miles distant; the most remote mountain seen is Donkia, 23,176 feet high, and seventy-three miles distant; whilst Kinchin, which forms the principal mass both for height and bulk, is exactly forty-five miles distant.

On first viewing this glorious panorama, the impression produced on the imagination by their prodigious elevation is, that the peaks tower in the air and pierce the clouds, and such are the terms generally used in descriptions of similar alpine scenery; but the observer, if he look again, will find that even the most stupendous occupy a very low position on the horizon, the top of Kinchin itself measuring only $4^{\circ} 31'$ above the level of the observer! Donkia again, which is 23,176 feet above the sea, or about 15,700 above Mr. Hodgson's, rises only $1^{\circ} 55'$ above the horizon; an angle which is quite inappreciable to the eye, when unaided by instruments.*

This view may be extended a little by ascending Simchul, which rises a thousand feet above the elevation of Mr. Hodgson's house, and is a few miles south-east of

* These are the apparent angles which I took from Mr. Hodgson's house (alt. 7300 feet) with an excellent theodolite, no deduction being made for refraction.

Dorjiling: from its summit Chumulari (23,929 feet) is seen to the north-east, at eighty-four miles distance, rearing its head as a great rounded mass over the snowy Chola range, out of which it appears to rise, although in reality lying forty miles beyond;—so deceptive is the perspective of snowy mountains. To the north-west again, at upwards of 100 miles distance, a beautiful group of snowy mountains rises above the black Singalelah range, the chief being, perhaps, as high as Kinchinjunga, from which it is fully eighty miles distant to the westward; and between them no mountain of considerable altitude intervenes; the Nepalese Himalaya in that direction sinking remarkably towards the Arun river, which there enters Nepal from Tibet.

The top of Sinchul is a favourite excursion from Dorjiling, being very easy of access, and the path abounding in rare and beautiful plants, and passing through magnificent forests of oak, magnolia, and rhododendron; while the summit, besides embracing this splendid view of the snowy range over the Dorjiling spur in the foreground, commands also the plains of India, with the courses of the Teesta, Mahanuddee, Balasun and Meechi rivers. In the months of April and May, when the magnolias and rhododendrons are in blossom, the gorgeous vegetation is, in some respects, not to be surpassed by anything in the tropics; but the effect is much marred by the prevailing gloom of the weather. The white-flowered magnolia (*M. excelsa*, Wall.) forms a predominant tree at 7000 to 8000 feet; and in 1848 it blossomed so profusely, that the forests on the broad flanks of Sinchul, and other mountains of that elevation, appeared as if sprinkled with snow. The purple-flowered kind again (*M. Campbellii*) hardly occurs below 8000 feet, and forms an immense, but very ngly, black-barked, sparingly branched

137tree, leafless in winter and also during the flowering season, when it puts forth from the ends of its branches great rose-purple cup-shaped flowers, whose fleshy petals strew the ground. On its branches, and on those of oaks and laurels, *Rhododendron Dalhousiæ* grows epiphytically, a slender shrub, bearing from three to six white lemon-scented bells, four and a half inches long and as many broad, at the end of each branch. In the same woods the scarlet rhododendron (*R. arboreum*) is very scarce, and is outvied by the great *R. argenteum*, which grows as a tree forty feet high, with magnificent leaves twelve to fifteen inches long, deep green, wrinkled above and silvery below, while the flowers are as large as those of *R. Dalhousiæ*, and grow more in a cluster. I know nothing of the kind that exceeds in beauty the flowering branch of *R. argenteum*, with its wide spreading foliage and glorious mass of flowers.

Oaks, laurels, maples, birch, chesnut, hydrangea, a species of fig (which is found on the very summit), and three Chinese and Japanese genera, are the principal features of the forest; the common bushes being *Aucuba*, *Skimmia*, and the curious *Helwingia*, which bears little clusters of flowers on the centre of the leaf, like butcher's-broom. In spring immense broad-leaved arums spring up, with green or purple-striped hoods, that end in tail-like threads, eighteen inches long, which lie along the ground; and there are various kinds of *Conrallaria*, *Paris*, *Begonia*, and other beautiful flowering herbs. Nearly thirty ferns may be gathered on this excursion, including many of great beauty and rarity, but the tree-fern does not ascend so high. Grasses are very rare in these woods, excepting the dwarf bamboo, now cultivated in the open air in England.

000 Before proceeding to narrate my different expeditions into

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LEPCHAS, CHARACTERISTICS OF.

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Before proceeding to narrate my different expeditions into
 Sikkim and Nepal from Dorjiling, I shall give a sketch of 128
 the different peoples and races composing the heterogeneous
 population of Sikkim and the neighbouring mountains.

The Lepcha is the aboriginal inhabitant of Sikkim, and 101
 the prominent character in Dorjiling, where he undertakes 144
 all sorts of out-door employment. The race to which he
 belongs is a very singular one; markedly Mongolian in
 features, and a good deal too, by imitation, in habit; still
 he differs from his Tibetan prototype, though not so
 decidedly as from the Nepalese and Bhotanese, between
 whom he is hemmed into a narrow tract of mountain
 country, barely 60 miles in breadth. The Lepchas possess 773
 a tradition of the flood, during which a couple escaped to
 the top of a mountain (Tendong) near Dorjiling. The 173
 earliest traditions which they have of their history date
 no further back than some three hundred years, when they
 describe themselves as having been long-haired, half-clad
 savages. At about that period they were visited by
 Tibetans, who introduced Boodh worship, the platting of
 their hair into pig-tails, and very many of their own
 customs. Their physiognomy is however so Tibetan in its 174
 character, that it cannot be supposed that this was their
 earliest intercourse with the trans-nivean races: whether
 they may have wandered from beyond the snows before the
 spread of Boodhism and its civilisation, or whether they
 are a cross between the Tamulian of India and the
 Tibetan, has not been decided. Their language, though [177]
 radically identical with Tibetan, differs from it in many 619
 important particulars. They, or at least some of their 173
 tribes, call themselves Rong, and Arratt, and their country
 Dijong: they once possessed a great part of East Nepal,
 as far west as the Tambur river, and at a still earlier
 period they penetrated as far west as the Arun river.

157 An attentive examination of the Lepcha in one respect entirely contradicts our preconceived notions of a mountaineer; as he is timid, peaceful, and no brawler; qualities which are all the more remarkable from contrasting so strongly with those of his neighbours to the east and west: of whom the Ghorkas are brave and warlike to a proverb, and the Bhotanese quarrelsome, cowardly, and cruel. A group of Lepchas is exceedingly picturesque. They are of short stature—four feet eight inches to five feet—rather broad in the chest, and with muscular arms, but small hands and slender wrists.* The face is broad, flat, and of eminently Tartar character, flat-nosed and oblique-eyed, with no beard, and little moustache; the complexion is sallow, or often a clear olive; the hair is collected into an immense tail, plaited flat or round. The lower limbs are powerfully developed, befitting genuine mountaineers: the feet are small. Though never really handsome, and very womanish in the cast of countenance, they have invariably a mild, frank, and even engaging expression, which I have in vain sought to analyse; and which is perhaps due more to the absence of anything unpleasing, than to the presence of direct grace or beauty. In like manner, the girls are often very engaging to look upon, though without one good feature: they are all smiles and good-nature; and the children are frank, lively, laughing urchins. The old women are thorough hags. Indolence, when left to themselves, is 181 their besetting sin; they detest any fixed employment, and their foulness of person and garments renders them disagreeable inmates: in this rainy climate they are 186 supportable out of doors. Though fond of bathing when

[41] * I have seldom been able to insert my own wrist (which is smaller than the average) into the wooden guard which the Lepcha wears on his left, as a protection against the bow-string: it is a curved ring of wood with an opening at one side, through which, by a little stretching, the wrist is inserted.

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LEPCHAS.

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Though fond of bathing when they come to a stream in hot weather, and expert, even 515
admirable swimmers, these people never take to the water 481
for the purpose of ablution. In disposition they are 181



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LEPCHA GIRL, AND BUDDHIST LAMA.

amiable and obliging, frank, humorous, and polite, without the servility of the Hindoos; and their address is free and unrestrained. Their intercourse with one another and with Europeans is scrupulously honest; a present is divided equally amongst many, without a syllable of discontent or grudging look or word: each, on receiving

181 his share, coming up and giving the donor a brusque bow
and thanks. They have learnt to overcharge already, and
439 use extortion in dealing, as is the custom with the people
of the plains; but it is clumsily done, and never accom-
panied with the grasping air and insufferable whine of the
441 latter. They are constantly armed with a long, heavy,
578 straight knife,* but never draw it on one another: family
and political feuds are alike unheard of amongst them.

181 The Lepcha is in morals far superior to his Tibet and
595 Bhotan neighbours, polyandry being unknown, and poly-
gamy rare. This is no doubt greatly due to the conventual
system not being carried to such an excess as in Bhotan,
where the ties of relationship even are disregarded.

291 Like the New Zealander, Tasmanian, Fuegian, and
natives of other climates, which, though cold, are moist
and equable, the Lepcha's dress is very scanty, and when
we are wearing woollen under-garments and hose, he is
content with one cotton vesture, which is loosely thrown
round the body, leaving one or both arms free; it reaches
to the knee, and is gathered round the waist: its fabric is
close, the ground colour white, ornamented with longi-
tudinal blue stripes, two or three fingers broad, prettily
worked with red and white. When new and clean, this
garb is remarkably handsome and gay, but not showy. In
cold weather an upper garment with loose sleeves is added.

441 A long knife, with a common wooden handle, hangs by
291 the side, stuck in a sheath; he has often also a quiver of
poisoned arrows and a bamboo† bow across his back.
On his right wrist is a curious wooden guard for the

* It is called "Ban," and serves equally for plough, toothpick, table-knife, hatchet, hammer, and sword.

† The bamboo, of which the quiver is made, is thin and light: it is brought from Assam, and called Tulda, or Dulwa, by the Bengalees.

bowstring; and a little pouch, containing aconite poison [41] and a few common implements, is suspended to his girdle. 291 A hat he seldom wears, and when he does, it is often extravagantly broad and flat-brimmed, with a small hemispherical crown. It is made of leaves of *Scitamineæ*, [184] between two thin plates of bamboo-work, clumsy and 285 heavy; this is generally used in the rainy weather, while in the dry a conical one is worn, also of platted slips of bamboo, with broad flakes of talc between the layers, and a peacock's feather at the side. The umbrella consists of 293 a large hood, much like the ancient boat called a coracle, which being placed over the head reaches to the thighs behind. It is made of platted bamboo, enclosing broad [184] leaves of *Phrynium*. A group of Lepchas with these on, running along in the pelting rain, are very droll figures; they look like snails with their shells on their backs. All 301 the Lepchas are fond of ornaments, wearing silver hoops in their ears, necklaces made of cornelian, amber, and [184] turquoise, brought from Tibet, and pearls and corals from the south, with curious silver and golden charm-boxes or amulets attached to their necks or arms. These are of 445 Tibetan workmanship, and often of great value: they 799 contain little idols, charms and written prayers, or the bones, hair, or nail-parings of a Lama: some are of great beauty, and highly ornamented. In these decorations, and 301 in their hair, they take some pride, the ladies frequently 515 dressing the latter for the gentlemen: thus one may often see, the last thing at night, a damsel of discreet port, demurely go behind a young man, unplait his pig-tail, tease the hair, thin it of some of its lively inmates, braid it up for him, and retire. The women always wear 302 two braided pig-tails, and it is by this they are most readily distinguished from their effeminate-looking partners, who wear only one,

600 partners, who wear only one.* When in full dress, the
 292 woman's costume is extremely ornamental and picturesque ;
 besides the shirt and petticoat she wears a small sleeveless
 woollen cloak, of gay pattern, usually covered with crosses,
 and fastened in front by a girdle of silver chains. Her
 [301] neck is loaded with silver chains, amber necklaces, &c., and
 her head adorned with a coronet of scarlet cloth, studded
 with seed-pearls, jewels, glass beads, &c. The common
 [293] dress is a long robe of indi, a cloth of coarse silk, spun
 [231] from the cocoon of a large caterpillar that is found wild at
 the foot of the hills, and is also cultivated: it feeds on
 many different leaves, Sal (*Shorea*), castor-oil, &c.

262 In diet, they are gross feeders ; † rice, however, forming
 their chief sustenance ; it is grown without irrigation, and
 produces a large, flat, coarse grain, which becomes gelati-
 nous, and often pink, when cooked. Pork is a staple
 dish : and they also eat elephant, and all kinds of animal
 food. When travelling, they live on whatever they can
 [189] find, whether animal or vegetable. Fern-tops, roots of
Scitamineæ, and their flower-buds, various leaves (it is
 difficult to say what not), and fungi, are chopped up, fried
 with a little oil, and eaten. Their cooking is coarse and
 [263] dirty. Salt is costly, but prized ; pawn (Betel pepper) is
 [274] never eaten. Tobacco they are too poor to buy, and too
 indolent to grow and cure. Spices, oil, &c. are relished.

[264] They drink out of little wooden cups, turned from knots
 415 of maple, or other woods ; these are very curious on several
 accounts ; they are very pretty, often polished, and mounted
 with silver. Some are supposed to be antidotes against

[71] * Ermann (Travels in Siberia, ii. p. 204) mentions the Buraet women as
 wearing two tails, and fillets with jewels, and the men as having one queue only.

[113] † Dr. Campbell's definition of the Lepcha's *Flora cibaria*, is, that he eats, or
 must have eaten, everything soft enough to chew ; for, as he knows whatever is
 poisonous, he must have tried all ; his knowledge being wholly empirical.

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LEPCHAS, CUSTOMS AND MARRIAGES.

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Some¹ are supposed to be antidotes against poison, and hence fetch an enormous price; they are of a peculiar wood, rarer and paler coloured. I have paid a guinea for one such, hardly different from the common sort, which cost but 4*d.* or 6*d.* MM. Huc and Gabet graphically allude to this circumstance, when wishing to purchase cups at Lhassa, where their price is higher, as they are all imported from the Himalaya. The knots from which they are formed, are produced on the roots of oaks, maples, and other mountain forest trees, by a parasitical plant, known to botanists as *Balanophora*. [752] 415 [435]

Their intoxicating drink, which seems more to excite than to debauch the mind, is partially fermented Murwa grain (*Eleusine Coracana*). Spirits are rather too strong to be relished raw, and when a glass of wine is given to one of a party, he sips it, and hands it round to all the rest. A long bamboo flute, with four or six burnt holes far below the mouth-hole, is the only musical instrument I have seen in use among them. When travelling, and the fatigues of the day are over, the Lepchas will sit for hours chatting, telling stories, singing in a monotonous tone, or blowing this flute. I have often listened with real pleasure to the simple music of this rude instrument; its low and sweet tones are singularly *Æolian*, as are the airs usually played, which fall by octaves: it seems to harmonize with the solitude of their primæval forests, and he must have a dull ear who cannot draw from it the indication of a contented mind, whether he may relish its soft musical notes or not. Though always equipped for the chase, I fancy the Lepcha is no great sportsman; there is little to be pursued in this region, and he is not driven by necessity to follow what there is. 273 517 533 224

Their marriages are contracted in childhood, and the wife purchased by money, or by service rendered to the husband. 533 522

¹ [i.e., wooden cups. - Analyst]

[532] future father-in-law, the parties being often united before
[533] the woman leaves her parents' roof, in cases where the
payment is not forthcoming, and the bridegroom prefers
giving his and his wife's labour to the father for a stated
period in lieu. On the time of service expiring, or the
[595] money being paid up, the marriage is publicly celebrated
by feasting and riot. The females are generally chaste,
[581] and the marriage-tie is strictly kept, its violation being
[584] heavily punished by divorce, beating, slavery, &c. In cases
of intermarriage with foreigners, the children belong to the
[462] father's country. All the labours of the house, the field,
[567] and march, devolve on the women and children, or slaves
if they have them.

[164] Small-pox is dreaded, and infected persons often cruelly
shunned: a suspicion of this or of cholera frequently
emptying a village or town in a night. Vaccination has been
[751] introduced by Dr. Pearson, and it is much practised by
Dr. Campbell; it being eagerly sought. Cholera is scarcely
known at Dorjiling, and when it has been imported thither
has never spread. Disease is very rare amongst the
Lepchas; and ophthalmia, elephantiasis, and leprosy, the
scourges of hot climates, are rarely known. Goitre prevails,*
though not so conspicuously as amongst Bhoteeas,

* May not the use of the head instead of the shoulder-strap in carrying loads be a predisposing cause of goitre, by inducing congestion of the laryngeal vessels? The Lepcha is certainly far more free from this disease than any of the tribes of E. Nepal I have mixed with, and he is both more idle and less addicted to the head-strap as a porter. I have seen it to be almost universal in some villages of Bhoteeas, where the head-strap alone is used in carrying in both summer and winter crops; as also amongst the salt-traders, or rather those families who carry the salt from the passes to the Nepalese villages, and who very frequently have no shoulder-strap, but invariably head-bands. I am far from attributing all goitre, even in the mountains, to this practice, but I think it is proved, that the disease is most prevalent in the mountainous regions of both the old and new world, and that in these the practice of supporting enormous loads by the cervical muscles is frequent. It is also found in the Himalayan sheep and goats which accompany the salt-traders, and whose loads are supported in ascending, by a band passing under the throat.

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LEPCHAS, RELIGION

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Bhotanese, and others. Rheumatism is frequent, and inter-¹⁶⁴
mittent fevers, with ague; also violent and often fatal
remittents, almost invariably induced by sleeping in the
hot valleys, especially at the beginning and end of the
rains. The European complaints of liver and bowel disease
are all but unknown. Death is regarded with horror. The⁷⁶¹
dead are burnt or buried, sometimes both; much depending⁷⁶⁴
on custom and position. Omens are sought in the entrails⁷⁸⁷
of fowls, &c., and other vestiges of their savage origin are
still preserved, though now gradually disappearing.

The Lepchas profess no religion, though acknowledging⁷⁷¹
the existence of good and bad spirits. To the good they
pay no heed; "Why should we?" they say, "the good
spirits do us no harm; the evil spirits, who dwell in every
rock, grove, and mountain, are constantly at mischief,
and to them we must pray, for they hurt us." Every⁷⁵⁶
tribe has a priest-doctor; he neither knows nor attempts
to practise the healing art, but is a pure exorcist; all^[753]
bodily ailments being deemed the operations of devils,
who are cast out by prayers and invocations. Still they
acknowledge the Lamas to be very holy men, and were the^[793]
latter only moderately active, they would soon convert
all the Lepchas. Their priests are called "Bijooas:"
they profess mendicancy, and seem intermediate between
the begging friars of Tibet, whose dress and attributes they
assume, and the exorcists of the aboriginal Lepchas: they
sing, dance (masked and draped like harlequins), beg,
bless, curse, and are merry mountebanks; those that affect^[777]
more of the Lama Boodhist carry the "Mani," or revolving
praying machine, and wear rosaries and amulets; others
again are all tatters and rags. They are often employed
to carry messages, and to transact little knaveries. The⁷⁵⁶
natives stand in some awe of them, and being besides of a⁷⁸¹

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[75] generous disposition, keep the wallet of the Bijooa always full.

131 Such are some of the prominent features of this people,
181 who inhabit the sub-Himalayas, between the Nepalese and Bhotan frontiers, at elevations of 3000 to 6000 feet. In their relations with us, they are conspicuous for their honesty, their power as carriers and mountaineers, and their
[342] skill as woodsmen; for they build a waterproof house with a thatch of banana leaves in the lower, or of bamboo in the elevated regions, and equip it with a table and bedsteads for three persons, in an hour, using no implement but their heavy knife. Kindness and good humour soon attach them to your person and service. A gloomy-tempered or morose master they avoid, an unkind one they flee. If they serve a good hills-man like themselves, they will follow him with alacrity, sleep on the cold, bleak mountain exposed to the pitiless rain, without a murmur, lay down the heavy burden to carry their master over a stream, or give him a helping hand up a rock or precipice—do anything, in short, but encounter a foe, for I believe the Lepcha to be a veritable coward.* It is well, perhaps, he is so: for if a race, numerically so weak, were to embroil itself by resenting the injuries of the warlike Ghorkas, or dark Bhotanese, the folly would soon lead to destruction.

131 Before leaving the Lepchas, it may be worth mentioning
144 that the northern parts of the country, towards the Tibet
161 frontier, are inhabited by Sikkim Bhotecas † (or Kumpas),

* Yet, during the Ghorka war, they displayed many instances of courage: when so hard pressed, however, that there was little choice of evils.

† Bhot is the general name for Tibet (not Bhotan), and Kumpa is a large province, or district, in that country. The Bhotanese, natives of Bhotan, or of the Dhurma country, are called Dhurma people, in allusion to their spiritual chief, the Dhurma Rajah. They are a darker and more powerful race, rude, turbulent, and Tibetan in language and religion, with the worst features of those people exaggerated. The various races of Nepal are too numerous to be alluded

a mixed race calling themselves Kumpa Rong, or Kumpa¹³¹
 Lepchas; but they are emigrants from Tibet, having come¹⁴⁴
 with the first rajah of Sikkim. These people are more¹⁸¹
 turbulent and bolder than the Lepchas, and retain much of
 their Tibetan character, and even of that of the very pro-
 vince from which they came; which is north-east of Lhasa,
 and inhabited by robbers. All the accounts I have received
 of it agree with those given by MM. Huc and Gabet.

Next to the Lepchas, the most numerous tribe in Sikkim⁰⁰⁰
 is that of the Limboos (called "Chung" by the Lepchas);
 they abound also in East Nepal, which they once ruled,
 inhabiting elevations from 2000 feet to 5000 feet. They
 are Boodhists, and though not divided into castes, belong
 to several tribes. All consider themselves as the earliest
 inhabitants of the Tambur Valley, though they have a tradi-
 tion of having originally emigrated from Tibet, which their
 Tartar countenance confirms. They are more slender and
 sinewy than the Lepchas, and neither plait their hair nor
 wear ornaments; instead of the ban they use the Nepal
 curved knife, called "cookree," while for the striped kirtle
 of the Lepcha are substituted loose cotton trousers and a
 tight jacket; a sash is worn round the middle, and on the
 head a small cotton cap. When they ruled over East
 Nepal, their system was feudal; and on their uniting
 against the Nepalese, they were with difficulty dislodged
 from their strongholds. They are said to be equally brave
 and cruel in battle, putting the old and weak to the sword,

to here: they are all described in various papers by Mr. Hodgson, in the "Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal." The Dhurma people are numerous at Dorjiling; they are often runaways, but invariably prove more industrious settlers than the Lepchas. In the Himalaya the name Bhotan is unknown amongst the Tibetans; it signifies literally (according to Mr. Hodgson) the end of Bhote, or Tibet, being the eastern extreme of that country. The Lepchas designate Bhotan as Ayeu, or Aieu, as do often the Bhotanese themselves. Sikkim, again, is called Lhop, or Lho', by the Lepchas and Bhotanese.

carrying the younger to slavery, and killing on the march such captives as are unable to proceed. Many enlist at [703]Dorjiling, which the Lepchas never do; and the rajah of Nepal employs them in his army, where, however, they seldom obtain promotion, this being reserved for soldiers of Hindoo tribes. Latterly Jung Bahadur levied a force of 6000 of them, who were cantoned at Katmandoo, where the cholera breaking out, carried off some hundreds, causing many families who dreaded conscription to flock to Dorjiling. Their habits are so similar to those of the Lepchas, that they constantly intermarry. They mourn, burn, and bury their dead, raising a mound over the corpse, erecting a headstone, and surrounding the grave with a little paling of sticks; they then scatter eggs and pebbles over the ground. In these offices the Bijooa of the Lepchas is employed, but the Limboo has also priests of his own, called "Phedangbos," who belong to rather a higher order than the Bijooas. They officiate at marriages, when a cock is put into the bridegroom's hands, and a hen into those of the bride; the Phedangbo then cuts off the birds' heads, when the blood is caught on a plantain leaf, and runs into pools from which omens are drawn. At death, guns are fired, to announce to the gods the departure of the spirit; of these there are many, having one supreme head, and to them offerings and sacrifices are made. They do not believe in metempsychosis.

The Limboo language is totally different from the Lepcha, with less of the *s* in it, and more labials and palatals, hence more pleasing. Its affinities I do not know; it has [712]no peculiar written character, the Lepcha or Nagri being used. Dr. Campbell, from whom I have derived most of my information respecting these people, was informed,*

* See "Dorjiling Guide," p. 89. Calcutta, 1845.

on good authority, that they had once a written language, ~~now~~ now lost; and that it was compounded from many others by a sage of antiquity. The same authority stated that their Lepcha name "Chung" is a corruption of that of their place of residence; possibly the "Tsang" province of Tibet.

The Moormis are the only other native tribe remaining in any numbers in Sikkim, except the Tibetans of the loftier mountains (whom I shall mention at a future period), and the Mechis of the pestilential Terai, the forests of which they never leave. The Moormis are a scattered people, respecting whom I have no information, except from the authority quoted above. They are of Tibetan origin, and called "Nishung," from being composed of two branches, respectively from the districts of Nimo and Shung, both on the road between Sikkim and Lhasa. They are now most frequent in central and eastern Nepal, and are a pastoral and agricultural people, inhabiting elevations of 4000 to 6000 feet, and living in stone houses, thatched with grass. They are a large, powerful, and active race, grave, very plain in features, with little hair on the face. Both their language and religion are purely Tibetan.

The Magras, a tribe now confined to Nepal west of the Arun, are aborigines of Sikkim, whence they were driven by the Lepchas westward into the country of the Limboos, and by these latter further west still. They are said to have been savages, and not of Tibetan origin, and are now converted to Hindooism. A somewhat mythical account of a wild people still inhabiting the Sikkim mountains, will be alluded to elsewhere.

It is curious to observe that these mountains do not appear to have afforded refuge to the Tamulian * aborigines

* The Tamulians are the Coles, Dangas, &c., of the mountains of Central India and the peninsula, who retired to mountain fastnesses, on the invasion of their

of India proper: all the Himalayan tribes of Sikkim being markedly Mongolian in origin. It does not, however, follow that they are all of Tibetan extraction; perhaps, indeed, none but the Moormis are so. The Mechi of the Terai is decidedly Indo-Chinese, and of the same stock as the savage races of Assam, the north-east and east frontier of Bengal, Arracan, Burmah, &c. Both Lepchas and Limboos had, before the introduction of Lama Boodhism from Tibet, many features in common with the natives of Arracan, especially in their creed, sacrifices, faith in omens, worship of many spirits, absence of idols, and of the doctrine of metempsychosis. Some of their customs, too, are the same; the form of their houses and of some of their implements, their striped garments, their constant and dexterous use of the bamboo for all utensils, their practice of night-attacks in war, of using poisoned arrows only in the chase, and that of planting "crow-feet" of sharp bamboo stakes along the paths an enemy is expected to follow. Such are but a few out of many points of resemblance, most of which struck me when reading Lieutenant Phayre's account of Arracan,* and when travelling in the districts of Khasia and Cachar.

The laws affecting the distribution of plants, and the lower animals, materially influence the migrations of man also; and as the botany, zoology, and climate of the Malayan and Siamese peninsula advance far westwards into India, along the foot of the Himalaya, so do also the varieties of the human race. These features are most conspicuously displayed in the natives of Assam, on both sides of the Burrampooter, as far as the great bend of that river, beyond which they gradually disappear; and none of the

country by the Indo-Germanic conquerors, who are now represented by the Hindoos.

* "Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal."

Himalayan tribes east of that point practise the bloody and ~~over~~ brutal rites in war that prevail amongst the Looties, Khasias, Garrows, and other Indo-Chinese tribes of the mountain forests of Assam, Eastern Bengal, and the Malay peninsula.

I have not alluded to that evidence of the extraction of the Sikkim races, which is to be derived from their languages, and from which we may hope for a clue to their origin; the subject is at present under discussion, and involved in much obscurity.

That six or seven different tribes, without any feudal system or coercive head, with different languages and customs, should dwell in close proximity and in peace and unity, within the confined territory of Sikkim, even for a limited period, is an anomaly; the more especially when it is considered that except for a tincture of the Boodhist religion among some few of the people, they are all but savages, as low in the scale of intellect as the New Zealander or the Tahitian, and beneath those races in ingenuity and skill as craftsmen. Wars have been waged amongst them, but they were neither sanguinary nor destructive, and the fact remains no less remarkable, that at the period of our occupying Dorjiling, friendship and unanimity existed amongst all these tribes; from the Tibetan at 14,000 feet, to the Mechi of the plains; under a sovereign whose temporal power was wholly unsupported by even the semblance of arms, and whose spiritual supremacy was acknowledged by very few.